

Kansas

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Helping People Help the Land



What We Do

President Roosevelt signed the bill establishing the Soil Conservation Service on April 27, 1935. Now called the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), we have a deeply held vision of a nation where the use of our natural resources is guided by a widely shared and heartfelt stewardship ethic.

Our approach starts with talking one-on-one with the landowner to understand their goals. We then apply science-based conservation practices to create a plan to fix problems such as soil health, grazing capacity, water and wind erosion, wildlife preservation, and wetlands management.



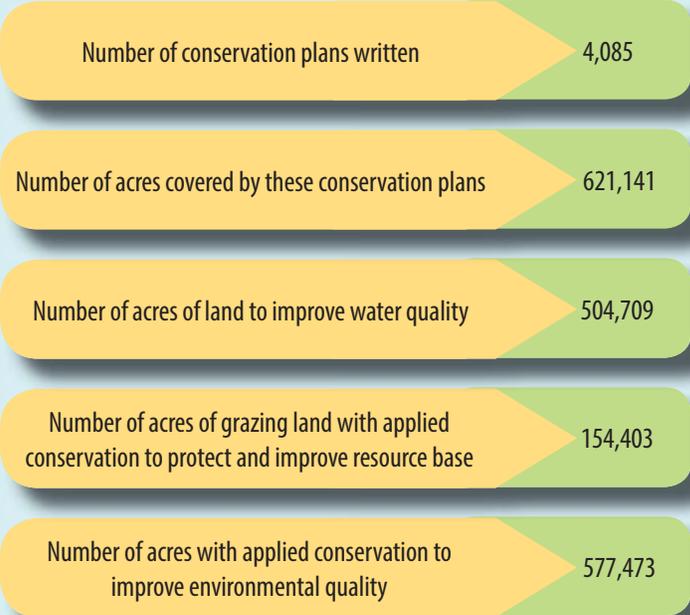
We use the latest technologies such as water erosion modeling, precision mapping software, and other tools to provide practical solutions based on tested practices. This technical assistance is free.



Kansas is Conservation Strong

The following pages provide an overview of the work being done by the Kansas Natural Resources Conservation Service. We are often co-located with our sister USDA agency, the Farm Service Agency. Together, we are striving to streamline the customer experience for farmers and ranchers. USDA, along with the Kansas conservation districts, state and local governments, universities, and other conservation partners are working together to help farmers and ranchers have sustainable operations.

Kansas NRCS Technical Assistance For 2016



The farming disaster caused by drought and poor conservation practices in the 1930's spurred a new era of conservation innovation.

One of the worst dust storms in American history occurred on April 14, 1935, a day known as "Black Sunday."



After moving across Kansas, the dust cloud reached Washington, D.C. the next day. Congress took immediate action.

President Roosevelt signed the bill creating the Soil Conservation Service on April 27, 1935. The name was changed to the Natural Resources Conservation Service in 1994 to reflect the agency's mission to provide expertise for all resource concerns.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program - Putting Conservation on the Farm

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to plan and implement conservation practices that improve soil, water, plant, animal, air, and related natural resources on agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland. Financial assistance payments are made to producers to complete approved conservation practices.

Environmental Quality Incentive Programs (EQIP) Fiscal Year 2016					
Program	Number of Contracts Approved	Acres	Funds Obligated	Number of Unfunded Eligible Applications	Unfunded Eligible Applications (%)
General EQIP	816	190,760	\$20,779,822	547	40%
Ogallala Aquifer Initiative	10	1,404	\$1,164,050	11	52%
Lesser Prairie-Chicken Initiative	6	23,271	\$605,919	none	
National Water Quality Initiative	13	1,868	\$373,093	none	
Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative	39	221	\$293,443	17	30%
Organic Initiative	3	302	\$61,248	none	
On-Farm Energy Initiative	2	77	\$16,957	none	
Monarch Butterfly Habitat Development	7	144	\$20,917	none	

Regional Conservation Partnership Program - Engaging the Conservation Community

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) offers new opportunities for NRCS, conservation partners, and agricultural producers to work together to harness innovation and expand the conservation mission. Besides NRCS assistance, RCPP partners make a significant contribution to the cost of the project.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Fiscal Year 2016			
Partnership	Number of Contracts Approved	Acres	Funds Obligated
Advanced Irrigation Water Management on the High Plains Aquifer	17	2,598	\$126,852
Improving Water Quality Through the Implementation of Forestry Practices	16	1,569	\$144,709
Kansas Pheasant Initiative	3	754	\$71,285
Middle and Lower Neosho River Water Quality Project	18	1,906	\$338,260
Grassland Birds and Grazing Land Enhancement Initiative	11	4,703	\$223,153



Rancher Ed Koger (left) and researcher Jonathan Lautenbach prepare to radio-collar a heifer as part of a study of how cattle and prairie chickens use recently burned grasslands.

Conservation Stewardship Program - Enabling Sustainable Production

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP) helps you build on your existing conservation efforts while strengthening your operation. Whether you are looking to improve grazing conditions, increase crop yields, or develop wildlife habitat, NRCS can custom design a CStP plan to help you meet those goals.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP) Fiscal Year 2016					
Program	Number of Contracts Approved	Acres	Funds Obligated	Number of Unfunded Eligible Applications	Unfunded Eligible Applications (%)
Conservation Stewardship Program	479	1,043,208	\$11,050,934	181	27%

Total Funds Obligated for EQIP, RCPP, and CStP for FY2016
(Kansas)

\$35,269,916



Conservation Starts with Soil Health

Soil is a living and life-giving substance, without which we would perish. Soil is teeming with micro-organisms, working together to create an environment that provides vital nutrients for plants. Likewise, plant roots exude carbohydrates that provide food for the micro-organisms. This symbiotic relationship between the plants and micro-organisms is known as the "soil food web."

Conservation practices such as no-till, cover crops, and crop rotation builds healthy soils. These practices conserve water by absorbing rainwater, keeping runoff from fouling streams and water supplies.

As world population increases and demand for food rises, keeping our soil healthy and productive is of paramount importance. So much so that we believe improving the health of our Nation's soil is one of the most important endeavors of our time.



Agricultural Conservation Easement Program - Protecting Wildlife

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands. Under the Agricultural Land Easements component, NRCS helps American Indian tribes, state and local governments, and non-governmental organizations protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of the land.

Under the Wetlands Reserve Easement component, NRCS helps to restore, protect, and enhance enrolled wetlands.



Dan Pace stands next to the river that runs through his 240-acre wetland easement.

Number of Wetland Reserve Easements enrolled in FY2016	5
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Number of Wetland Reserve Easements enrolled in FY2017	23*
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*Largest number enrolled for Wetland Reserve Easements in a single fiscal year

Emergency Watershed Protection Program - When a Natural Disaster Strikes



The Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP) helps communities with restoration after a disaster strikes. EWP provides financial and technical assistance for projects where the damages left from the aftermath of a disaster poses an imminent threat to life, property, or both.

Tornado debris removal in Dickinson County. This is 1 of 9 sites completed in 2017. Total cost was \$647,953.

In 2016, Kansas had a total of 102 tornadoes. Of those, 62 percent occurred in May and 11 percent in October. This is the 9th highest total since 1950.

Kansas NRCS funded a little over \$2M in 2016/2017 for 7 EWP projects involving 17 sites.

Watershed Operations (PL-566) - Working with Kansas Watershed Districts

NRCS has received 13 proposals from 6 Watershed Districts. These proposals total \$12,676,900. \$6,976,900 of this is for design and construction for 12 backlog NRCS priority projects with authorized work plans but not yet built and the remaining \$5.7 million is for work plan and environmental assessment updates.

Sponsors in Kansas have built more than 800 flood control dams since 1948 under Public Law 566. Kansas has the third largest number of flood control dams in the United States.

Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) - Supporting Kansas Conservation Innovators

Playa Lakes Joint Venture, Kansas Dynamic Surface Water Application,	\$50,000
Kansas State University, Improving Soil Health & Profitability with Cover Crops and Precision Conservation	\$49,990
Kansas State University, Restoring Grazing Land Hydrologic Services Through Eastern Redcedar	\$49,281
Kansas State University, Cover Crops to Increase Water Infiltration in Dryland & Irrigated Systems in Western Kansas	\$49,933
Kansas Conservation Innovation Grants Awarded in 2017	\$199,204

"There's a strong partnering with producers with all these projects. Successful CIG applicants will work directly with farmers and ranchers to conduct field demonstrations of their proposed technology."

"Producers are then able to immediately benefit and apply newly discovered technologies in their operations."

Eric Banks, Kansas State Conservationist



Kansas NRCS Organization at a Glance

Kansas State Conservationist
Eric Banks

ASTC Management & Strategy

ASTC Programs

State Resource Conservationist

State Engineer

State Soil Scientist

ASTC Water Resources

ASTC = Assistant State Conservationist

ASTC Field Operations Area 1

ASTC Field Operations Area 2

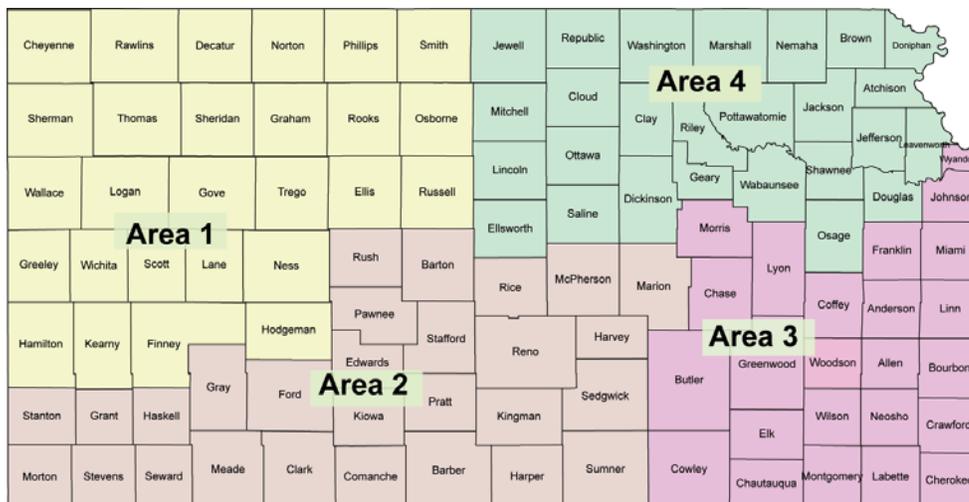
ASTC Field Operations Area 3

ASTC Field Operations Area 4

Broad Range of Expertise Needed to Solve the Resource Concerns of Producers

To provide technical and financial help to landowners, NRCS hires people with specialized technical knowledge, most requiring a bachelors degree or higher in a specific scientific field, from all types of backgrounds. There are many more technical positions, such as cartographers, agronomists, and computer specialists working in the agency. The table below list the specialties farmers and ranchers will work with most often.

Job Title	What They Do
Soil Conservationist	Do conservation planning and provide technical help to everyone from family farmers to local government officials. Provide solutions to conserve the soil, improve water quality, manage nutrients, restore wetlands, and protect and improve wildlife habitat.
Soil Conservation Technician	Advise landowners on the effectiveness of applying soil and water conservation practices and assist in research efforts. Design conservation practices and oversee their installation. This work is key to the success of NRCS because these ground practices directly improve, conserve, or restore our natural resources.
Rangeland Management Specialist	Help plan grazing systems to improve the quality of forage and other grazing land functions. Provide guidance on how to use grazing animals to improve and sustain natural resources. Offer advice on water management, invasive species control, and sustainable forage production.
Soil Scientist	Map and classify soils and solve problems such as soil moisture and erosion. Use digital and satellite imagery to map soils and write descriptions. Evaluate soil quality and work with information on watersheds, water quality, and changes in land-use patterns. Work requires knowledge of chemical, physical, mineralogical and biological properties and processes of the soils and their relations to climate, physiographic, and biological influences.
Biologist	Spend most of their time on-site working with private landowners, other agencies, and units of government. Provide technical support and advice on fish and wildlife habitat development or restoration and suggest methods to manage fish and wildlife populations, restore streams and wetlands, and improve habitat.
Engineer	NRCS employs a large number of engineers who have specialized skills in erosion control, water management, structural design, construction, hydraulics, soil mechanics, and environmental protection. Job assignments may include restoring streams, controlling erosion, developing water systems for livestock, improving and conserving irrigation water, and restoring wetlands.
Engineering Technician	Involved in planning, design, and construction work. Help with surveying the land, plotting survey information, and laying out construction measures. Gather data, make computations, and prepare maps and cross sections of profiles. May serve as a construction inspector on a wide variety of projects.



Area 1	Hays	785.625.2588
Area 2	Hutchinson	620.663.3501
Area 3	Emporia	620.343.7276
Area 4	Manhattan	785.776.7582
State Office	Salina	785.823.4500

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www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/



To locate your county USDA NRCS and FSA service center, go to <http://offices.usda.gov/>

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